Guide for Charter School Education Planning and Results Reporting

Requirements for Alberta charter school authority three-year education plans for 2009/10 – 2011/12 and annual education results reports, November 2009

April 2009

Government of Alberta
Education

Guide for Charter School Education Planning and Results Reporting, 2009–2012©

Requirements for Alberta charter school authorities.
Highlighted text indicates changes from prior year.

This document is online at http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/planning.aspx and provides the requirements for:

- Charter school three-year education plans for 2009-2012. These plans cover the 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 school years. The due date for three-year plans has been extended to June 30, 2009.
- Charter school Annual Education Results Reports on the 2008/09 school year, based on the three-year education plans for 2008-2011. Charter school reports are due on November 30, 2009.

For more information or for additional copies of this document, contact:

Sharon Campbell, Executive Director
Performance Measurement and Reporting
Alberta Education
9th floor, Commerce Place, 10155-102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L5

Phone: (780) 427-8217 (in Edmonton)
310-0000 (Toll-free within Alberta)
Fax: (780) 422-5255
Email: measurement.education@gov.ab.ca

Project Manager

Elaine Solez, Senior Manager
Performance Measurement and Reporting
Alberta Education

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Comments?

Send an email to:
measurement.education@gov.ab.ca

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Guide for Charter School Education Planning and Results Reporting 2009 edition

Requirements for:

- Charter school three-year education plans, 2009/2010 to 2011/2012
- Charter school annual education results reports, November 2009

This guide is issued under authority of the following:

- *School Act*, RSA 2000, Section 78
- *School Act*, RSA 2000, Section 36(1)
- Alberta Regulation 120/2008, *Government Organization Act*, Education Grants Regulation, Section 7

Deputy Minister of Education

April 20, 2009
Date

Charter School Education Planning 2009-2012 and Results Reporting November 2009

Requirements for Alberta charter school authorities

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What's changed?

Key changes are highlighted in green throughout the document and include:

	Page
• Extension to the deadline for jurisdiction three-year education plans to June 30, 2009.	Inside cover, 2-3, 2-8
• School Authority Accountability Policy has been revised and incorporated into the planning and reporting guide, along with citations from the relevant legislation and regulations, expanded information on accountability and accountability framework.	1-1 to 1-3, Appendix A, Appendix C
• A methodology has been developed to phase in the improvement and overall evaluations when a new performance measure is added to the Accountability Pillar. Preliminary evaluations will be calculated beginning with two years of results and provided each year until there are four years of results and the complete improvement and overall evaluations can be calculated.	1-6, Appendix B, page 7
• The criteria for an overall evaluation of "Concern" has been expanded to include an achievement evaluation of "Very Low" along with an improvement evaluation of "Maintained."	1-7
• Starting in 2009/2010, the optional format in Word for the three-year education plan (3YEP) and the Annual Education Results Report (AERR) will be populated with the Accountability Pillar results and provided with the Accountability Pillar reports — the plan format in May and the AERR format in October. The plan format is based on school board three-year education plan requirements so it can be used as a starting point for charter school plans, e.g., charter goals, outcomes, performance measures and communication plan will need to be added.	2-3, 3-1, 3-3
• The Alberta Commission on Learning measures are no longer required in three-year education plans, starting with the 2009-2012 plan. The questions remain on the 2009 Accountability Pillar surveys for reporting in the November 2009 AERR.	2-5, 3-5, Appendix B, pages 6, 8
• There is a new goal (Goal 3) on First Nations Métis and Inuit (FNMI) student success with corresponding outcome and performance measures. The purpose of this goal is to emphasize the importance of improving programs and results for FNMI students and to reduce the achievement gap between FNMI students and Alberta students overall.	2-5 to 2-7, Appendix B, page 7
The new goal applies to all school authorities, including charter schools. Charter schools that have no or very few self-identified FNMI students should include a reference in Goal 3 to related strategies in Goals 1 and 2, such as strategies to meet the diverse needs of students or strategies to infuse Aboriginal perspectives into educational programs for all students. Strategies to address needs of FNMI students to achieve outcomes not included in the FNMI goal, e.g., safe and caring, effective working relationships, are appropriate to include in other goals. Strategies for FNMI students for common outcomes, such as high school completion, can be included in Goal 1 and referenced in Goal 3 to avoid duplication.	2-5 to 2-7, Appendix B, page 9
Charter schools will receive FNMI results, as available, in the Accountability Pillar reports on the Extranet starting in May 2009 for internal use. A timeline for providing results and evaluations to school authorities for the new FNMI measures has been added to Appendix B. The introduction of school-level reporting of FNMI results in a future year will be determined in consultation with stakeholders.	
• Clarified that three-year education plans and action plans need to be updated in the fall when the new year of achievement test and diploma exam results become available, if either of these measures has an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern."	2-3
• Clarified that capital and facility plan highlights in the three-year education plans should reflect the priorities in the charter school's capital/facilities plan.	2-7

Section

1

Background

Structure and Purpose of Alberta's K-12 Education System

The basic education of Alberta's children is the responsibility of the provincial government and is governed by the *School Act*. Per Provisions of the *School Act*, education is delivered by a system of schools operated by school boards and francophone, charter school and private school authorities for the benefit of students. The highest priority of the K-12 education system is the success of every child in school. Each type of school authority assures the quality of education for its students and the Ministry of Education assures the quality of education provided by school authorities.

Accountability in Alberta's K – 12 Education System

Accountability arises from a delegation of responsibility from one party to another. Some discretion in how these delegated responsibilities are exercised is associated with the delegation to an accountable organization. This delegation of responsibilities also comes with an obligation to answer for and publicly report on the discharge of responsibilities and results achieved by the accountable organization. Consequences are conferred on the accountable organizations based on performance.

In Alberta's K – 12 education system, school authorities (school boards, francophone education authorities, charter schools and accredited private school authorities) are considered accountable organizations. The Ministry of Education allocates funds to school authorities to fulfill their delegated responsibilities to provide education programs for Alberta's K – 12 students, which creates an accountability relationship between the Ministry and school authorities. This accountability relationship is established in legislation and regulation, as summarized below.

Note: This document applies to charter school authorities. Separate planning and reporting guides are available for school boards and accredited-funded private schools on the Ministry of Education's website.

Legislative Authority

Section 78 of the *School Act* requires school boards to develop an accountability system on any matter the Minister prescribes, to use accountability information and to report it to students, parents and electors in the manner the Minister prescribes. Section 7 of the Education Grants Regulation under the *Government Organization Act* requires recipients of grants from the Ministry of Education to provide the Minister, upon request, any information the Minister considers necessary for the purpose of determining whether or not the recipient has complied or is complying with the conditions of the grant. Section 13 of the School Councils Regulation under the *School Act* requires school boards to provide school councils in their jurisdiction with the opportunity to be involved in the development of the school's education plan and annual results report, and requires boards to provide the school's results and reasonable interpretation of provincial tests and other provincial measures. Section 36(1) of the *School Act*, Section 22 on school councils and 78 apply to charter schools. The text of these sections of legislation and regulations is provided in Appendix A.

To operationalize the accountability relationships and processes established in provincial legislation, the *Guide for Charter School Education Planning and Results Reporting* contains the Minister's requirements for charter school three-year education plans and annual education results reports pursuant to the *School Act* and the *Government Organization Act*. With the elimination of the *Policy, Regulations and Forms Manual*, the *Guide for Charter School Education Planning and Results Reporting* also contains the updated School Authority Accountability Policy.

The Minister's requirements in the *Guide for Charter School Education Planning and Results Reporting* ensure alignment between charter school education plans and annual results reports and the Ministry of Education's vision, mission, goals, outcomes and performance measures for the basic education system. In this way, these Ministry and charter school documents help ensure that the K – 12 education system is focused on a common purpose and direction to meet the educational needs of Alberta students. At the same time, charter school plans incorporate local strategies and may incorporate local goals, priorities, outcomes and measures that reflect the unique characteristics and circumstances of their communities. Similarly, charter school results reports include information on charter school activities and results on provincial and local measures. In short, charter school three-year

education plans and annual education results reports reflect local needs and priorities within the context of provincial direction and framework.

In addition, charter schools have a unique purpose in Alberta's public education system to provide different and innovative approaches for improving student learning, not only for the benefit of their own students, but also for use in other schools.

School Authority Accountability Policy

School authorities are accountable for results achieved from carrying out their responsibilities to provide education programs to Alberta students. As accountable organizations, school authorities are required to:

- establish a system of accountability for results that encompasses their schools
- interpret and report results to parents, students, the Ministry of Education and the public in a manner and at a time the Minister prescribes
- use results to improve the quality and effectiveness of education programs provided to their students and to improve student learning and achievement.

Accountability Framework for the K-12 Education System

The Accountability Framework for the K – 12 education system is a formal structure established by the Ministry to support accountability throughout the system and to ensure alignment of schools with provincial direction for education. This helps ensure the highest priority of the education system is the success of the student. The Accountability Framework consists of:

- three-year education plans (3YEPs), which contain
  - measureable goals and outcomes
  - performance measures to provide information on achievement of outcomes
  - targets to improve low or declining performance levels
  - strategies to achieve outcomes and improve results

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  - measureable goals and outcomes
  - performance measures to provide information on achievement of outcomes
  - targets to improve low or declining performance levels
  - strategies to achieve outcomes and improve results

- implementation of strategies and programs, adjusting if necessary
- annual education results reports (AERRs) that publicly report results, assess achievement and whether improvement has taken place
- answering to the Ministry for performance results over time
- a performance management cycle that supports continuous improvement and critical reflection in the K – 12 system.

Performance Management Cycle for School Authority Accountability

For charter schools, the performance management cycle involves:

- developing/updating plans that are aligned with provincial goals, outcomes and performance measures
- incorporating community input
- preparing budgets that allocate or re-direct resources to achieve goals and improve results
- implementing strategies to maintain or improve student learning and achievement
- monitoring implementation and adjusting efforts as needed
- measuring, analyzing and reporting results
- using results to identify areas for improvement and to develop strategies for the next plan, i.e., evidence-based decision making
- communicating with stakeholders (staff, students, parents or guardians, school councils, the public and Alberta Education) about charter school plans and results.

The performance management cycle is illustrated below.

Accountability Pillar of the Renewed Funding Framework

Accountability for results was strengthened with the implementation of the Renewed Funding Framework for school authorities, which is based on three pillars: Flexibility, Accountability and Funding, and has the following fundamental characteristics:

- equitable distribution of funds
- increased flexibility in use of funds to facilitate local decision making
- public accountability for use of resources and results achieved.

The Accountability Pillar consists of a common set of performance measures and consistent, fair evaluations of results. Through the Accountability Pillar increased emphasis is placed on achieving outcomes, reporting results and using results for informed decision making for the purpose of improving programs and student results in subsequent years. School authority performance is measured, evaluated and reported by comparing current results against both past performance and provincial standards on a common set of measures, using a common evaluation methodology.

The performance management cycle is illustrated below.

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School authorities continue to be accountable for meeting the learning needs of all students and ensuring that provincial legislation, regulations, policies and standards are met.

The Accountability Pillar enhances the use of measurement in performance management of school jurisdictions. The Accountability Pillar includes:

- a concise set of performance measures that address important outcomes of the education system (see list of measures organized by goal and outcome on page 2-5)
- results for performance measures calculated by Alberta Education using consistent methodologies, including annual surveys of parents, students and teachers
- standard methodology to evaluate results in a fair and transparent manner
- consistent, accessible data reports from Alberta Education to school authorities for use in school planning and reporting.

Accountability Pillar Evaluation Methodology

Each measure within the set of Accountability Pillar measures is evaluated on two bases: achievement and improvement, then given an overall evaluation that combines the achievement and improvement evaluations. Four years of results are used to evaluate a measure.

The **achievement** evaluation compares the current charter school result against fixed standards for each measure, which are set by selecting the 5th, 25th, 75th and 95th percentiles on the distribution of all school boards' baseline three-year average results. These standards are held constant for seven to ten years. The comparison of the current result to the standards results in one of the following achievement levels:

- Very High (blue) for results at or above the 95th percentile
- High (green) for results between the 75th and 95th percentiles
- Intermediate (yellow) for results between the 25th and 75th percentiles
- Low (orange) for results between the 5th and 25th percentiles
- Very Low (red) for results below the 5th percentile.

  Note: The Achievement Evaluation Table in the Measure Evaluation Reference section of the charter school's Accountability Pillar Overall Summary report contains the range of values for each standard for each measure.

The **improvement** evaluation compares the current charter school result with prior three-year average charter school result for each measure,

using a statistical test to determine the extent of change. This results in one of the following improvement levels:

- Improved significantly (blue)
- Improved (green)
- Maintained (yellow)
- Declined (orange)
- Declined significantly (red)

Note: The Improvement Evaluation Table in the Measure Evaluation Reference section of the charter school's Overall Summary Report contains information about the statistical test used to determine change in results over time.

When new measures are added to the Accountability Pillar, a preliminary **improvement** evaluation will be calculated beginning with two years of results until four years of results are available for the full improvement evaluation. This phase-in of the improvement evaluation will start with the new Rutherford Scholarship measure.

The evaluations of improvement and achievement are combined for the **overall** evaluation for the measure, resulting in one of the following overall evaluations for the measure:

- Excellent (blue)
- Good (green)
- Acceptable (yellow)
- Issue (orange)
- Concern (red)

The revised table below indicates how the achievement and improvement evaluations are combined to arrive at an overall evaluation for each measure. Starting with the May 2009 evaluations, results that have a "Very Low" achievement evaluation and a "Maintained" improvement evaluation will have an overall evaluation of "Concern" (formerly "Issue").

Improvement	Achievement				
	Very High	High	Intermediate	Low	Very Low
Improved Significantly	Excellent				Acceptable
Improved	Excellent			Acceptable	Issue
Maintained	Excellent		Acceptable	Issue	Concern
Declined		Acceptable	Issue	Issue	Concern
Declined Significantly	Acceptable	Issue	Issue	Concern	Concern

using a statistical test to determine the extent of change. This results in one of the following improvement levels:

- Improved significantly (blue)
- Improved (green)
- Maintained (yellow)
- Declined (orange)
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Improvement	Achievement				
	Very High	High	Intermediate	Low	Very Low
Improved Significantly	Excellent	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Improved	Excellent	Good	Good	Acceptable	Issue
Maintained	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Issue	Concern
Declined	Good	Acceptable	Issue	Issue	Concern
Declined Significantly	Acceptable	Issue	Issue	Concern	Concern

When new measures are added to the Accountability Pillar, a preliminary **overall** evaluation will be provided beginning with two years of results until the full improvement evaluation, which uses four years of results, is available.

The Accountability Pillar measures are organized into seven categories which reflect dimensions of education of importance to parents and the public:

- Safe and caring schools
- Student learning opportunities
- Student learning achievement, K – 9
- Student learning achievement, 10 – 12
- Preparation for life-long learning, employment and citizenship
- Involvement
- Continuous improvement.

Each of the seven categories of measures is given an evaluation that is based on an average of the overall evaluation for each measure within the category. This results in one of the following category evaluations:

- Excellent (blue)
- Good (green)
- Acceptable (yellow)
- Issue (orange)
- Concern (red)

The table that follows provides an example of the measure and category evaluations.

Category	Measure	Evaluations			
		Achievement	Improvement	Overall	Category
Student Learning Achievement (Grades 10 – 12)	Diploma: Acceptable	High	Maintained	Good	Acceptable
	Diploma: Excellence	Intermediate	Declined	Issue	
	Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ Exams)	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable	
	Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate	High	Improved	Good	

When new measures are added to the Accountability Pillar, a preliminary **overall** evaluation will be provided beginning with two years of results until the full improvement evaluation, which uses four years of results, is available.

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The table that follows provides an example of the measure and category evaluations.

Category	Measure	Evaluations			
		Achievement	Improvement	Overall	Category
Student Learning Achievement (Grades 10 – 12)	Diploma: Acceptable		Maintained		Acceptable
	Diploma: Excellence	Intermediate	**Declined**	**Issue**	
	Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ Exams)	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable	
	Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate				

Accountability Pillar Results and Evaluations for Charter Schools

Alberta Education collects data, calculates and provides five years of results, prior three-year averages and evaluations for the Accountability Pillar measures and categories to charter schools twice a year. The early May results are provided for charter schools to use in preparing their three-year education plan. An update is provided in early October, when the new year of achievement test and diploma exam results are available, for reporting in the AERR.

The Accountability Pillar reports from Alberta Education contain additional breakdowns to assist charter schools analyze and address their results, such as results and evaluations for courses and, starting in May 2009, specific populations of students.

Charter School and Alberta Education Review and Follow-up

The evaluation of the Accountability Pillar measures provides a consistent, fair and transparent assessment of results and helps charter schools identify areas needing improvement.

The results and evaluations of Accountability Pillar measures provide information on charter school performance and trends over time. Charter schools have responsibility for:

- applying their expertise in data and program analysis as well as their knowledge of local conditions (context) to develop an understanding of the results
- determining how best to bring about improvement.

Requirements

All charter schools are required to address Accountability Pillar results in their three-year education plans by including strategies for each outcome. In addition, for any measure with an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern," charter schools must:

- include and clearly identify (e.g., highlight) strategies in their three-year education plans that will improve results over time, taking into account the factors affecting performance based on data and contextual analysis
- set incremental targets for each year of the plan for measures that have an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern."

For any measure with two or more years of low or declining results based on the Accountability Pillar evaluations (e.g., those with a current overall evaluation of "Concern" in 2009 and an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern" in 2008), charter schools also must:

- develop a specific Action Plan designed to improve these results
- implement the Action Plan in the first year of the three-year education plan (3YEP), e.g., in the 2009/2010 school year for the 2009-2012 3YEP school year based on the 2008 and 2009 evaluations.

Alberta Education staff meet with charter school staff twice a year – in the fall to review jurisdiction three-year education plans and in the winter to review AERRs. These reviews include:

- looking at Accountability Pillar measure results and evaluations
- discussing the charter school's efforts to maintain good results and to improve results where needed, with priority on measures that drop to or remain at the "Issue" or "Concern" level.

See Appendix D for information on the development of the Accountability Pillar.

Section

2

Education Plans for Charter Schools, 2009 – 2012

An Overview of the Process

Preparing/Updating Education Plans

The planning component of the performance management cycle involves:

Requirements

- updating three-year education plans annually in keeping with provincial direction for the K – 12 education system
- developing the budget to support the plan.

Updated charter school plans maintain a three-year time frame – as one year is completed another is added, rolling the plan forward. At the same time:

- strategies and targets are adjusted based on performance over time, the Accountability Pillar measure evaluations, and local factors such as changes in charter school priorities and the operating environment (context)
- the budget is developed to implement the first year of the plan and to position the charter school for future years.

This approach to planning enables charter schools to be responsive to student and community needs and to focus on continuous improvement while maintaining continuity from year to year and consistency with provincial direction.

The board of the charter school society is ultimately accountable for and approves the three-year education plan. The charter board provides overall direction for the education plan. In consultation with parents, school staff and other stakeholders in the community, the charter school administration develops a planning and budgeting process that meets charter school needs and is responsible for preparing the content of the plan and the budget to resource the plan for approval by the charter board.

In response to requests from jurisdictions, an **optional** format in Word that is populated with the required Accountability Pillar measures will be provided on the Extranet with the Accountability Reports in May 2009.

The populated format is based on the school jurisdiction three-year education plan requirements so is a starting point for the charter school three-year education plan.

Considerations in Updating Education Plans

Requirement

Charter schools are required to update their three-year education plans each year. Annual updates take the following considerations into account:

- charter school results and evaluations of Accountability Pillar measures provided in May and the provincial diploma exam and achievement test results and evaluations provided in October, which may require revising the plan posted in June
- input from stakeholders such as school councils, students, parents and the public

Guidelines

- available resources
- Alberta Education's three-year business plan and provincial performance results and trends
- feedback from Alberta Education.

Entirely new plans are prepared infrequently. However, components such as strategies and targets are reviewed each year, while components such as the vision, mission and beliefs (foundation statements) are revisited and refreshed on an occasional basis. Such reviews are particularly appropriate when an application to renew the school's charter is being developed.

Communicating Education Plans

Requirement

Three-year education plans are public documents, which must be posted on the charter school's website. This includes any subsequent amendments or updates. Charter schools also are encouraged to use a variety of methods to communicate their plans and their achievements to the broader community, such as newspaper inserts, brochures and community meetings.

Guidelines

Education Plan Due Date

Three-year education plans for charter schools are due by May 31 each year **(extended to June 30, 2009 for the 2009 – 2012 plan)**. Charter schools are **required** to post their updated three-year plans on their websites by the due date and send an email to the respective Zone Director advising that the plan has been posted to the charter school's website along with the web link to the plan. If plans are revised after the initial notification (e.g., adjust strategies to improve achievement test and diploma exam results after the new year of results are available if the overall evaluation is "Concern" in 2009 following an evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern" in 2008), the Zone Director **must** be advised by email of the changes and the posting of the revised plan.

Reviewing Education Plans

Alberta Education staff review three-year education plans and discuss them with superintendents to:

- enhance the department's understanding of the charter school's context
- encourage charter school improvement efforts
- monitor compliance with provincial requirements
- identify implications for provincial planning.

Components and Requirements of Three-Year Education Plans 2009 – 2012

[Components are in bold below and defined in Appendix C, pages 9-10. An optional format in Word, populated with the required Accountability Pillar results, will be provided with the May 2009 Accountability Pillar reports that charter schools can use in preparing their three-year plans.]

Optional

❒ **Message from board chair**

Required

❒ An **accountability statement**, worded as follows:

The Education Plan for (name of charter school) for the three years commencing September 1, (year) was prepared under the direction of the Board in accordance with the responsibilities under the *School Act* and the *Government Organization Act*. This Education Plan was developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Charter Board is committed to achieving the results laid out in this plan.

Optional

❒ **Foundation Statements** — vision, mission, principles and beliefs.
Note: the Ministry's vision and mission statements have been updated in the Ministry of Education's 2009-2012 business plan.

Optional

❒ **A Profile of the Charter School**

Optional

❒ **Trends and issues**

Required

❒ **Provincial goals, related outcomes, performance measures, targets and strategies.** Include:

- the one-page evaluation of charter school results from the May 2009 Accountability Pillar Overall Summary report provided by Alberta Education, which contains the evaluation for each measure and category.

- Provincial goals and outcomes. For each outcome, include:
  - the measures used to assess progress and achievement of the outcome (see list on page 2-5) i.e., the measure statements for Goals 1, 2, 3 and 4.
  - reference to the results and evaluation for the measures on the overall summary page, i.e., results and evaluation for Goals 1, 2 and 4.
  - targets for each year of the plan for measures in Goals 1, 2 and 4 with an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern."

    These targets must reflect reasonable progress toward or moving into the next higher achievement standard, as defined by the evaluation methodology, over the plan period. For example, if the charter school result is more than 10 percentage points below the next higher achievement standard, it may not be possible to move into that higher standard in three years, but it would be possible to achieve results that are closer to the next standard. Refer to the Achievement Evaluation Table included in the Accountability Pillar Overall Summary report on the Extranet for the range of results that are included in each achievement standard.

    Notes:
    - As gains are made toward or into the next achievement standard, the improvement evaluation will reflect this progress with an evaluation of "Maintained" or higher.
    - While useful, especially for Accountability Pillar measures, targets are not required except for the Accountability Pillar measures with an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern."

Required Goals, Outcomes, Performance Measures and Targets

Listed below are the required goals, outcomes and performance measures for charter school three-year education plans for 2009/10 to 2011/12. Targets for each year of the plan are required for Accountability Pillar measures in Goals 1, 2 and 4 with an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern." Measures that are not part of the Accountability Pillar are shaded in gray.

CHARTER GOAL(S)	Outcomes and Performance Measures (Section 35 of the *School Act* reflecting the charter school's purpose/mandate.) • Locally determined.
GOAL ONE: **High Quality Learning Opportunities**	OUTCOME: **School environments are safe and caring.** • Overall teacher, parent and student agreement that students are safe at school, learning the importance of caring for others, learning respect for others and are treated fairly at school.
	OUTCOME: **The education system meets the needs of all K–12 students, our society and the economy.** • Overall teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, and health and physical education. • Overall teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education. OUTCOME: **Children and youth with at risk factors have their needs addressed through timely and effective programs and supports.** • Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18 *(high school programs)*. OUTCOME: **Students complete programs so that they are ready to attend post-secondary institutions and/or contribute as members of society and to the economy.** • High school completion rate of students within three years of entering Grade 10 *(high school programs)*.
GOAL TWO: **Excellence in Student Learning Outcomes**	OUTCOME: **Students demonstrate high standards in learner outcomes.** • Overall percentage of students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard, and the percentage who achieved the standard of excellence on Provincial Achievement Tests *(overall cohort results) (K – 9 programs)*. • Overall percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard, and overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on diploma examinations *(overall results) (high school programs)*. • Percentage of students writing four or more diploma exams within three years of entering Grade 10 *(high school programs)* • Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship *(high school programs)*.
	OUTCOME: **Students are well prepared for lifelong learning.** • High school to post-secondary transition rate of students within six years of entering Grade 10 *(high school programs)*. • Overall teacher and parent satisfaction that high school graduates demonstrate the knowledge and skills for lifelong learning *(required for K – 9 charter schools and optional for high school programs)*. OUTCOME: **Students are well prepared for employment.** • Overall teacher and parent agreement that students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school. OUTCOME: **Students model the characteristics of active citizenship.** • Overall teacher, parent and student agreement that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.
GOAL THREE: **Success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Students**	OUTCOME: **Key learning outcomes for FNMI students improve.** • Annual dropout rate of self-identified FNMI students aged 14-18. • High school completion rate of self-identified FNMI students within three years of entering Grade 10. • Overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard and overall percentage who achieved the standard of excellence on provincial achievement tests. • Overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students who achieved the acceptable standard and overall percentage who achieve the standard of excellence on diploma examinations. • Percentage of self-identified FNMI students writing four or more diploma examinations within three years of entering Grade 10. • Percentage of self-identified Grade 12 FNMI students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship. • High school to post-secondary transition rate for self-identified FNMI students within six years of entering Grade 10. **Note:** Reporting FNMI results in charter school 3YEPs and AERRs is not required in 2009. The introduction of public reporting of school-level FNMI results in a future year will be determined in consultation with stakeholders.

GOAL FOUR: Highly Responsive and Responsible Charter School	**OUTCOME: The education system at all levels demonstrates effective working relationships.** • Overall teacher and parent satisfaction with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education.
	OUTCOME: The charter school demonstrates leadership, innovation and continuous improvement. • Overall percentage of teachers, parents and students indicating that their school has improved or stayed the same in the last three years.

Notes:

- The results for the required measures are available in the Accountability Pillar reports on Alberta Education's Extranet. FNMI results will be provided starting 2009 for charter school use (e.g., results analysis, developing strategies, working with staff, FNMI students, parents and communities).
- The basis for calculating Rutherford Scholarship eligibility measure changes starting May 2009 to include students with an average of 75% or higher in specified high school courses.
- Consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, when the number of students or survey participants in a group is less than six, data must not be reported to protect individual privacy.
- See Appendix B for a brief definition of each performance measure and for the timeline for FNMI results and measures.

Optional

Charter schools may include additional results or contextual information to help explain strategies and targets to parents and the public, such as:

- achievement test or diploma exam results for specific grades and subjects
- participation rates in achievement tests
- five-year high school completion rates
- Accountability Pillar survey results for a particular respondent group.

Required

For each outcome, charter schools must develop and include **strategies** (at least one strategy for each outcome) in the plan, including strategies that:

- address learning needs and achievement of outcomes for all students
- reflect local context and needs of specific student populations, e.g., students with special needs, ESL, FNMI, as applicable
- specifically for Goal 3, charter schools with no or very few self-identified FNMI students may refer in Goal 3 to related strategies in Goals 1 or 2, such as strategies to meet the diversity of student needs or to infuse Aboriginal perspectives into educational programs for all students.

Notes:

- Including strategies for students with special needs satisfies the planning component of 14.a of the *Standards for Special Education* (amended June 2004) http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds)
- With the introduction of the FNMI goal, continue to address needs of FNMI students in strategies for other goals as appropriate, e.g., strategies for outcomes not included in the FNMI goal (safe and caring, parental involvement); strategies that encompass FNMI students in Goals 1, 2 and 4 can be cross-referenced in Goal 3 to avoid duplication.

– are designed to improve Accountability Pillar results. **Charter schools with an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern" based on the evaluation of Accountability Pillar results are required to clearly identify (e.g., highlight) their strategies for improving results for those measures.**

Charter schools are required to adjust and highlight strategies, and include targets if diploma exam or achievement test results have an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern".

Required

❒ **Budget Highlights.** This section presents highlights from the charter board's budget for the first year of the three-year plan in a way that is easily understood, transparent and meaningful to parents and the public. Budget highlights must provide key financial information about the upcoming school year, focusing on anticipated major changes or shifts in focus to address Accountability Pillar results. This section may refer to budgeted changes in enrolment, certificated and non-certificated staff, programs, funding, revenues and expenses, annual surpluses or deficits and accumulated surpluses. This section must include:

– guiding principles the board uses in financial planning

– charts/tables that summarize information from the charter board's budget

– a web link to the charter school's Budget Report Form.

Required

❒ **Highlights of facility and capital plans.** Include:

– A brief description of major school renewal or leasing projects underway or planned over the next three years (if applicable) and their benefit to students *(which students, programs).* The projects presented in this section must reflect the priorities in the charter school's three-year capital plan.

- A web link to more detailed information on the charter school's facility and capital plans.

Required

❒ **Publication and Communication.** Charter schools must post their updated education plans on their websites by May 31 (extended to June 30, 2009 for the 2009-2012 plan) and notify their zone director. The plan **must** include the following additional information:

- indicate how the plan was or will be communicated to parents and the public
- indicate what the charter board has done to meet its obligations under Section 13 of the School Councils Regulation (Alberta Regulation 113/2007) to provide opportunity for the school council to be involved in updating the charter school's plan and how the school council was involved in developing the plan.
- include the web link to the charter school three-year education plan in the posted document (and in the print version if available).

Charter schools have an obligation to share their effective practices and innovative approaches for the benefit of Alberta's education system as a whole. To support this, charter school education plans must include a

Required

Communication Plan that outlines how the school will carry out this obligation. The elements of a good communication plan include:

- objectives
- audiences
- key messages
- an action plan (specific communication strategies) with timelines.

Section

3

Results Report for 2008/2009 (November 2009)

An Overview of the Process

Preparing Results Reports

Required

Each year, charter schools **must** measure and interpret their performance and report on their progress toward achieving the goals and outcomes of their three-year education plans in their Annual Education Results Report (AERR). This includes measuring and reporting on local measures as well as reporting and responding to the measurement information and

Guideline

evaluations received from Alberta Education. The Accountability Pillar performance measure results and evaluations are a primary source of information for assessing and reporting on performance, and are used along with other charter school results and contextual information to determine where improvements are needed.

The AERR is prepared under the direction of the charter board, using a process determined by the charter school's accountability system. The report is approved by the charter school board and informs stakeholders where the charter school is in relation to where it wants to be in achieving its goals and outcomes. It demonstrates that the charter school board is accountable for results and for the wise use of resources to provide quality programs for students and to address areas for improvements. AERRs provide charter schools with the opportunity to summarize their accomplishments, in addition to reporting on performance.

Note: An optional populated template for the AERR will be provided with the October 2009 Accountability Pillar reports.

In preparing their results reports, charter schools compile and assess results and evaluations that pertain to the performance measures identified in their three-year education plans, taking into account provincial results, trends and context (see Alberta Education's 2008/09 Annual Report published September 2009 for provincial context), as well as local context. Charter school results come from:

- Alberta Education, which provides results and evaluations on the Extranet for the required measures, as follows:
  - Accountability Pillar surveys of students, parents and teachers.
  - Results from provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations.
  - High school completion rates, dropout rates, diploma examination participation rates, high school to post-secondary transition rates and Rutherford Scholarship eligibility rates.
- Local sources (schools and jurisdictions) including locally developed charter school surveys* used to collect information for local performance measures.

Reporting-Related Communications

Requirement

Annual Education Results Reports (AERRs) are public documents. Charter schools **are required to** post their AERRs on their websites and to include the web link to the posted document in the AERR (and include the web link in the print version if available).

Guidelines

Charter schools are encouraged to use tools such as newspaper inserts, brochures and community meetings to make the information more broadly accessible to parents and the public. Information that is

Requirement

summarized for public distribution **must** include results for all performance measures reported in the charter school's AERR.

Requirement

A charter school's AERR **must** identify:

- how the report was or will be communicated to the public
- how charter school annual education results reports are communicated to parents and to the community
- how school results and interpretation of Accountability Pillar measures are communicated to the school council.

* To support school jurisdictions in their local efforts to survey stakeholders, Alberta Education prepared a useful handbook, *How to Conduct Satisfaction Surveys: A Practical Guide to Conducting Surveys within Alberta's Education System*. The handbook can be downloaded from the department's website: http://education.alberta.ca/media/443322/SatisfactionSurveyGuide_2005.pdf.

Results Report Due Date

Requirement

Charter school jurisdictions post their AERR by the **due date of November 30** and notify Alberta Education by sending an email to the respective Zone Director:

- advising that the report has been posted to the charter school's website
- providing the web link to the report. If the report is revised following the initial notification, inform your Zone Director of the changes and re-posting.

Reviewing Annual Education Results Reports

Alberta Education staff review charter school AERRs to:

- enhance the department's understanding of charter school results
- determine whether implications of results for the next update of the charter school plan have been considered, e.g. how shortfalls in performance will be addressed
- monitor compliance with provincial requirements
- ensure consistency with the related education plan
- encourage charter school results reporting and improvement efforts
- identify implications for the department's planning.

Components and Requirements for the November 2009 AERR

The November 2009 Annual Education Results Report reports on the charter school's three-year education plan for 2008-2011 and includes the components listed below in bold (revisions since the February 2008 guide are highlighted). A populated template for the AERR is under development and will be provided to charter schools as part of the October 2009 Accountability Pillar reports.

Optional

❒ A **message** from the board chair.

Required

❒ An **accountability statement**, worded as follows:

The annual education results report for **(name of charter school)** the **(year)** school year was prepared under the direction of the Charter Board in accordance with the responsibilities under the *School Act* and the *Government Organization Act*. The Charter Board is

committed to using the results in this report, to the best of our abilities, to improve the outcomes for students in our jurisdiction. We will use the results to develop sound strategies for our three-year education plan to ensure that all our students can acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

Required

- ❒ The **Accountability Pillar Overall Summary** report provided by Alberta Education in October 2009.

Required

- ❒ Highlights for the previous year, including:
  - the charter school's **accomplishments** (impact of major activities/strategies), including programs and results for specific populations of students. (Note: reporting on programs, services and results for students with special needs satisfies the non-financial reporting component of Section 14.a and c of the *Standards for Special Education* (June 2004) http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds.
  - web links to the charter school's AISI project(s) annual report(s) and class size report.

Required

- ❒ Report the charter school's **performance measure results** for 2008/2009 in relation to the goals, outcomes and targets for 2008/09 set in the charter school's education plan for 2008/09 – 2010/11 (see next page for list of required measures). Specifically, for each required measure, report:
  - five years of charter school and provincial results (or available results if less than five years)
  - most recent result in relation to the target for 2008/09 (if applicable)
  - comment on results, such as contextual information, factors affecting performance and analysis of results; if results on Accountability Pillar measures have an improvement evaluation of "Improved" or "Improved significantly," identify the strategies or action taken by the charter school that may have contributed to this improvement.

Required Goals, Outcomes, Performance Measures and Targets

Listed below are all the required goals, outcomes and performance measures for the charter school November 2009 AERR. Measures that are not part of the Accountability Pillar are shaded in gray.

Categories	**Charter Goals, Outcomes and Performance Measures (Section 35 of the *School Act* reflecting the charter school's purpose/mandate.)** • **Locally determined.**
Safe and Caring Schools	**Goal One: High Quality Learning Opportunities for All** **Outcome: Schools provide a safe and caring environment.** • Overall teacher, parent and student agreement that students are safe at school, learning the importance of caring for others, learning respect for others and are treated fairly at school.
Student Learning Opportunities	**Outcome: The education system meets the needs of all K-12 students, society and the economy.** • Overall teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, and health and physical education. • Overall teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education. • Overall teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the accessibility, effectiveness and efficiency of programs and services for students in their community. **Outcome: Children and youth at risk have their needs addressed through effective programs and supports.** • Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18. **Outcome: Students complete programs.** • High school completion rate of students within three years of entering Grade 10. Also report the four- and five-year rates.
Student Learning Achievement, K-9	**Goal Two: Excellence in Student Learning Outcomes** **Outcome: Students demonstrate high standards in learner outcomes.** • Overall percentage of students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard, and the percentage who achieved the standard of excellence on Provincial Achievement Tests (overall cohort results). Also report cohort results for each subject and grade. [Reporting results on the basis of students writing is optional.]
Student Learning Achievement, 10-12	• Overall percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard, and overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on diploma examinations (overall results). Also report results for each exam. • Percentage of students writing four or more diploma exams within three years of entering Grade 10. • Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship.
Preparation for Life Long Learning, Employment, and Citizenship	**Outcome: Students are well prepared for lifelong learning.** • High school to post-secondary transition rate of students within six years of entering Grade 10. Also report the four-year rate. • Overall teacher and parent satisfaction that high school graduates demonstrate the knowledge and skills for lifelong learning (required for K – 9 charter schools and optional for high school programs). **Outcome: Students are well prepared for employment.** • Overall teacher and parent agreement that students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school. **Outcome: Students model the characteristics of active citizenship.** • Overall teacher, parent and student agreement that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.
Involvement	**Goal Three: Highly Responsive and Responsible Jurisdiction** **Outcome: The charter school demonstrates effective working relationships.** • Overall teacher and parent satisfaction with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education.
Continuous Improvement	**Outcome: The jurisdiction demonstrates leadership and continuous improvement.** • Overall percentage of teachers, parents and students indicating that their school and schools in their jurisdiction have improved or stayed the same the last three years. • Percentage of teachers reporting that in the past 3-5 years the professional development and in-servicing received from the school authority has been focused, systematic and contributed significantly to their ongoing professional growth.

Notes
- The results for these measures are available in the October 2009 Accountability Pillar reports on Alberta Education's Extranet.
- For Accountability Pillar survey measures, results from the Accountability Pillar Survey, rather than the charter school's own surveys, must be reported. Jurisdiction survey results may be used to report on local measures.
- Consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, when the number of students or survey participants in a group is less than six, data must not be reported to protect individual privacy.

- See Appendix B for a brief definition of each performance measure.
- 2009 is the last year to report the shaded measures.

Required

❒ Identify **future challenges**, including areas for improvement and how the charter school will address these. This section must contain information on how the charter school plans to improve results that have an "Issue" or "Concern" evaluation in May 2009 (October 2009 for achievement tests and diploma exams).

Required

❒ **Summary of Financial Results**

- provide key financial information about the school year, such as significant changes over the prior year, the annual operating surplus or deficit, accumulated operating surplus and capital reserves
- include program expenditure information in a table or graph format for the primary audience – parents and other members of the community
- indicate where more information on the charter school's sources of school generated funds and their uses can be obtained (e.g. web link to the Audited Financial Statements and related schedules, contact at central office) and that comparative information is available in a provincial report – provide the web link to the provincial roll up of charter school AFS information: http://education.alberta.ca/admin/funding/audited.aspx
- provide a web link to the charter school's Audited Financial Statements and related schedules for 2008/09.

Required

❒ **Capital and Facilities Projects**

- highlight, for parents and the public, progress on major charter school facilities projects, i.e., building renewal and leasing for the previous school year, as applicable, focusing on benefits to students, e.g., improved accommodation of students, enhanced learning opportunities *[which students, programs]*.

Required

❒ **Publication and Communication:** Charter schools must post the AERR for 2008/09 on their website by **November 30, 2009 and notify the Zone Director**. The AERR also must include the following information:

- Information on how the charter school's AERR is communicated to parents and the public

- how the charter board met its obligations under the School Councils Regulation (updated 2007) to provide the school council the opportunity to be involved in school AERRs and to share school results and interpretation of Accountability Pillar measures with the school council.
- the web link to the charter school AERR in both the print and posted versions.

Appendix

Legislation and Regulation – Key Excerpts

School Act

Accountability of board

78(1) A board shall develop a reporting and accountability system on any matter the Minister prescribes.

(2) A board shall disseminate any information in the reports and accounts produced under the reporting and accountability system it develops under subsection (1) to students, parents, electors or the Minister in the manner the Minister prescribes.

(3) A board shall use any information in the reports and accounts produced under the reporting and accountability system it develops under subsection (1) in the manner the Minister prescribes.

1995 c27 s9

Alberta Regulation 113/2007
School Act
SCHOOL COUNCILS REGULATION

Responsibilities of board

13(1) A board must provide the school council with an opportunity to provide advice on the development of the school's

(a) mission, vision and philosophy,

(b) policies,

(c) annual education plan,

(d) annual results report, and

(e) budget.

(2) A board must provide the school council with the school's provincial testing program results and other provincial measures and a reasonable interpretation of those results and measures.

Application of Act

36(1) The following provisions and any regulations made under them apply to a charter school and its operation, and a reference in those provisions or those regulations to a board or a trustee is deemed to include a reference to a society or company that operates a charter school or a member of the governing body of that society or company, as the case may be:

(c) Part 2 except sections 21(3), 28 and 29;

(d) in Part 3, sections 49, 50, 52, 54, 56, 57, 60, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80 and 81, section 82 except subsections (1)(a) and (2), sections 83 to 85 and section 86 except clauses (b) and (c);

RSA 2000 cS-3 s36; 2001 c27 s11

Alberta Regulation 120/2008
Government Organization Act
EDUCATION GRANTS REGULATION

General authority to make grants

2 The Minister may make grants, in accordance with this Regulation, for any purpose related to any program, service or matter under the Minister's administration.

Conditions on which grants are made

7 In addition to any conditions imposed by the Minister, it is a condition of every grant made under section (2)

(a) that the recipient shall

(i) use the grant only for the purpose for which it is made,

(ii) account to the Minister, in the manner that the Minister determines and to the Minister's satisfaction, for how the grant money or any portion of it was or is being used,

(iii) permit a representative of the Minister or the Auditor General to examine any books or records that the Minister or the Auditor General considers necessary to determine how the grant money has or is being used, and

(iv) provide to the Minister, on request, any information the Minister considers necessary for the purpose of determining whether or not the grant recipient has complied or is complying with the conditions of the grant.

Appendix

B

Definitions for Required Performance Measures

A brief definition of each required performance measure is provided below. Detailed information on the methodologies used to calculate results is available online in the Methodology for Performance Measures section of the 2007/2008 Ministry of Education annual report (http://education.alberta.ca/apps/annualreport), pages 82-88.

Outcomes	*Definitions for Required Performance Measures*
Schools provide a safe and caring environment for students.	**Safe and Caring:** Percentages of teachers, parents and students who agree that students are safe at school, are learning the importance of caring for others, are learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school. **Definition:** Teachers, parents and students are asked whether: – students feel safe at school – students feel safe on the way to and from school – students treat each other well at school – teachers care about their students – students are treated fairly by adults at school.
The education system meets the needs of all K-12 students, society and the economy.	**Program of Studies:** Percentages of teachers, parents and students satisfied with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, and health and physical education. **Definition:** Teachers, parents and students are asked about: – the variety of courses available to students/you at school, – opportunities students/you have at school to: • learn about music • learn about drama • learn about art • learn about computers • learn about health • learn another language • participate in physical education. **Education Quality:** Percentages of teachers, parents and students satisfied with the overall quality of basic education. **Definition:** Teachers, parents and students are asked about the following: – overall quality of education in your/your child's school – the quality of teaching in your/your child's school – what is being learned in the core subjects is useful (students), students are learning what they need to know (parents and teachers) – school work is interesting – school work is challenging – learning expectations at school are clear.

Outcomes	*Definitions for Required Performance Measures*
	Satisfaction with Program Access: Percentages of teachers, parents and students satisfied with the accessibility, effectiveness and efficiency of programs and services for students in their community. **Definition:** Teachers, parents and students are asked about the following services for student in schools: – academic counselling – career counselling – library services – supports for students with special needs. NOTE: 2009 is the last year to report this measure in the AERR.
Children at Risk have their needs addressed through effective programs and supports	**Drop Out Rate:** Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18. **Definition:** Alberta students aged 14-18 are tracked for one year to determine how many have left the education system without completing. Students are considered to have dropped out if they are not enrolled in the following year or have not met the high school completion criteria, i.e., have not, within the tracking period: received a high school diploma, IOP Certificate, high school equivalency (GED), earned credit in five Grade 12 courses (including four diploma exam courses), or enrolled in a K-12 school in Alberta, an Alberta post-secondary institution or registered in an Alberta apprenticeship program.
Students complete programs	**High School Completion Rate (3 yr):** Percentages of students who completed high school within three years of entering Grade 10. **Definition:** Alberta Grade 10 students are tracked for three years to determine if they have completed high school. Student are considered to have completed high school if they have, within the tracking period: – received an Alberta high school diploma, an IOP Certificate, high school equivalency (GED) – entered a post-secondary level program at an Alberta post-secondary institution – registered in an Alberta apprenticeship program or – earned credit in five Grade 12 level courses, including four diploma examination courses. Students who move from one school authority to another during high school are attributed to the school authority where they earned the most credits during high school. NOTE: Four- and five-year rates also are calculated and provided to school jurisdictions in May for use in planning. These additional results are required to be reported in the AERR.
Students Demonstrate High Standards	**PAT: Acceptable:** Percentages of students who achieve the acceptable standard on Grades 3, 6 and 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (overall all grades and subjects). **PAT: Excellence:** Percentages of students who achieve the standard of excellence on Grades 3, 6 and 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (overall all grades and subjects). **Definition:** A student achieving the acceptable standard shows an adequate understanding of the core knowledge and adequate basic skills essential core academic subjects: language arts, mathematics (for Grades 3, 6 and 9) and science and social studies (for Grades 6 and 9). A student achieving the standard of excellence consistently shows a deeper understanding of the concepts of the course demonstrating an ability to integrate information and evaluate it from various points of view. Results are calculated as the percentage of all students in each grade (total enrollment in the grade plus the ungraded students who are in the corresponding year of schooling) who have met the acceptable standard and the percentage who have met the standard of excellence. The overall result is the weighted average of the result for each test. NOTE: Results are also calculated for each grade and subject and provided to school jurisdictions for their use. These additional results are required to be reported in the AERR. **Diploma: Acceptable:** Percentages of students who achieve the acceptable standard on diploma examinations (overall results - all subjects). **Diploma: Excellence:** Percentages of students who achieve the standard of excellence on diploma examinations (overall results - all subjects). **Definition:** Diploma examination results are based on the numbers of students writing each exam who achieve the standards. Achieving the acceptable standard (i.e., a mark of 50%) indicates that the student has met the basic requirements of the course. Achieving the standard of excellence (i.e., a mark of 80%) indicates that the student has performed significantly beyond the minimum requirements of the course. The overall diploma exam result is the weighted average of the result for each exam. NOTE: Results also are calculated for each diploma exam subject and provided to school jurisdictions for their use. These additional results are required to be reported in the AERR. **Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ Exams):** Percentages of students who have written four or more diploma exams by the end of their third year in high school.

Outcomes	*Definitions for Required Performance Measures*
	Definition: The diploma exam participation rate is calculated by tracking Grade 10 students for three school years to determine the percentage of students who have written four or more diploma exams within the tracking period. **Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate:** Percentages of Grade 12 students who meet the Rutherford Scholarship eligibility criteria. **Definition:** Starting in 2007/2008 Rutherford Scholarship eligibility is calculated by determining the percentage of Alberta Grade 12 students who have an average of 75% or higher in any of the eligible Grades 10, 11 or 12 courses. Results for 2007/2008 and subsequent years will not be comparable to prior results, which were based on an average of 80% or higher. School authorities will receive the 2007/2008 results in May 2009.
Students are well prepared for lifelong learning	**Post-Secondary Transition Rate (6 yr):** Percentages of students who have enrolled in a post-secondary program within six years of entering Grade 10. **Definition:** The high school to post-secondary transition rate is calculated by tracking Alberta Grade 10 students for six years to determine if they have entered a post-secondary-level program at an Alberta post-secondary institution or registered in an Alberta apprenticeship program within the tracking period. An estimate of out-of-province post-secondary enrollment is applied based on the numbers of funded Alberta students attending post-secondary institutions out of province. NOTE: Four-year rates also are calculated and provided to school jurisdictions in May for use in planning. These additional results are required to be reported in the AERR. **Preparation for Lifelong Learning:** Percentages of teachers and parents satisfied that high school graduates demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning. **Definition:** Teachers and parents are asked whether: – high school students demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetimes – students at your school/your child are taught the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetimes.
Students are well prepared for employment	**Work Preparation:** Percentages of teachers and parents who agree that students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school. **Definition:** Teachers and parents are asked to indicate whether students in your school/your child are taught attitudes and behaviours that will enable them be successful at work when they leave school.
Students model the characteristics of active citizenship	**Citizenship:** Percentages of teachers, parents and students who are satisfied that students model the characteristics of active citizenship. **Definition:** Teachers, parents and students are asked whether students at your school/your child's school: – help each other – respect each other – are encouraged at school to be involved in activities that help the community (not asked on the Grade 4 survey) – are encouraged to try their best – follow the rules.
Key learning outcomes for FNMI students improve.	The measures used for this outcome are the same as the measures listed above for all students, excluding survey measures. These measures include: – Annual dropout rate of self-identified FNMI students aged 14-18. – High school completion rate of self-identified FNMI students within three years of entering Grade 10. – Overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard and overall percentage who achieved the standard of excellence on provincial achievement tests. – Overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students who achieved the acceptable standard and overall percentage who achieve the standard of excellence on diploma examinations within three years of entering Grade 10. – Percentage of self-identified FNMI students writing four or more diploma examinations. – Percentage of self-identified Grade 12 FNMI students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship. – High school to post-secondary transition rate for self-identified FNMI students within six years of entering Grade 10. Results are calculated for FNMI students using the identifier in the student's most recent registration year. This reflects the student's intent to be identified as FNMI. As participation in the self-identifier has increased each year, applying the FNMI self-identifier in this way to calculate results also provides the most complete set of results.

Outcomes	*Definitions for Required Performance Measures*
	NOTE: FNMI results will be provided to charter schools with the Accountability Pillar reports in May 2009 for internal use. Introduction of public reporting of school FNMI results in a future year will be determined in consultation with stakeholders.
The jurisdiction demonstrates effective working relationships with partners and stakeholders	**Parental Involvement:** Percentages of teachers and parents satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education. **Definition:** Teachers and parents are asked: – about the opportunity for parental involvement in decisions about their child's education – about the opportunity for parental involvement in decisions at their child's school – whether parental input into decisions at their child's school is considered – whether parents are involved "A Lot" or "Some" with decisions about their child's education.
The jurisdiction demonstrates leadership and continuous Improvement	**School Improvement:** Percentages of teachers, parents and students indicating that their school and schools in their jurisdiction have improved or stayed the same the last three years. **Definition:** Teachers and parents are asked whether the quality of education at your school/your child has received has improved, stayed the same or declined in the past three years. Students are asked: – are you proud of your school – would you recommend your school to a friend (not asked on the Grade 4 survey). **Inservice Jurisdiction Needs**: Percentages of teachers reporting that in the past 3-5 years the professional development and in-servicing received from the school authority has been focused, systematic and contributed significantly to their ongoing professional growth. **Definition:** Teachers are asked whether the professional development opportunities made available through the jurisdiction have: – been focused on the priorities of the jurisdiction – effectively addressed your professional development needs – significantly contributed to your on-going professional development. NOTE: 2009 is the last year to report this measure in the AERR.

Notes

1. For survey measures:
   - All teachers in K-12 schools and all students in Grades 4 and above and their parents are included in the charter school surveys.
   - The surveys of students and teachers are administered online, and the parent survey is mailed to the student's address on file.
   - The percentage for each respondent group is calculated by averaging the responses to all the questions that comprise the measure. The overall percentage is calculated by averaging the results for each respondent group.
   - A four-point scale is used for satisfaction and agreement questions, and don't know responses are recorded.
   - Results for each respondent group also are calculated and provided to school authorities for their use.
2. For measures that track students for one or more years, an attrition estimate, i.e., the number of students in the same age group who have left the province or are deceased, is factored into the calculation.
3. For measures based on the Grade 10 cohort, students are attributed to the jurisdiction where they earned the most credits.

Timeline for Providing Results and Evaluations for FNMI Measures to Charter Schools

Measure	Results and Achievement Evaluations Available May 2009	Improvement and Overall Evaluations Available
Provincial achievement tests	4 years of results	Starting May 2009
Diploma examinations	4 years of results	Starting May 2009
Dropout rates	3 years of results	Starting May 2010
High school completion rate (3-year)	3 years of results	Starting May 2010
Diploma exam participation rate	3 years of results	Starting May 2010
Rutherford Scholarship eligibility rate	1 year of results	Preliminary May 2010 Full starting May 2012
Post-secondary transition rate (6-year)	1 year of results and achievement evaluation starting May 2010	Preliminary May 2011 Full starting May 2013

Notes

- Results and evaluations of FNMI measures will be provided to charter schools in the Accountability Pillar reports on the Extranet starting May 2009 as available for their information and use in working with staff, FNMI students and communities.
- Results are calculated for FNMI students using the identifier in the student's most recent registration year. This reflects the student's intent to be identified as FNMI. As participation in the self-identifier has increased each year, this approach also provides the most complete result.
- The improvement and overall evaluations for new measures will be phased in instead of waiting for four years of results. Preliminary evaluations will begin with two years of results and will be calculated until four years of results are available for the full evaluation. This new method will be applied starting with the revised Rutherford Scholarship measure.
- One year of results for the 5-year high school completion rate and two years of results for the 4-year rate for FNMI students will be available in May 2009. These rates are not evaluated.
- The basis for calculating the Rutherford Scholarship measure changes for all students starting May 2009.
- Two years of results for the 4-year post-secondary transition rate for FNMI students will be available in May 2009. The 4-year rate is not evaluated.

Glossary of Planning and Accountability Terms

Accountability: An obligation to answer or account for assigned (delegated) responsibilities, e.g., for use of funds, results achieved and for taking action to make continuous improvement and achieve desired results. Accountability arises when one party delegates responsibility to another party. Some discretion on how responsibilities are carried out is associated with the delegation of responsibility to accountable organizations. In the public sector, accountability involves transparent public reporting of results as well as reporting to the organization, such as a government ministry, that delegated responsibilities and provided funding to an accountable organization. Consequences for performance are conferred by the delegating party.

Accountability Framework: A well-designed structure to ensure accountability within organizations and between governing bodies and delegated organizations (accountable parties). An accountability framework consists of measurable goals, performance measures that provide information on progress toward and achievement of outcomes, targets that indicate a desired level of performance, strategies that are implemented and adjusted as necessary to improve results over time, evaluation of results achieved, including whether improvement has taken place, public performance reports and consequences for the performance of accountable organizations.

Continuous Improvement: Using performance results to adjust strategies and practices so that improvement in performance is achieved over time.

Goals: Broad statements that look towards the long term and steer organizations in the direction of realizing their vision. Goals are typically expressed as desired conditions or aims.

Issues: Conditions that may affect the organization's ability to fulfill its mandate or achieve its goals.

Mission Statement: A clear, concise description of an organization's overall purpose and role. It gives direction to the programs and services that the jurisdiction provides for its students.

Outcomes: Measurable statements of what an organization seeks to achieve. In broad terms, they answer the question, "What will this look like when we get to where we want to be?"

Performance Measures: Performance measures provide information on important, quantifiable aspects of the education system. They enable jurisdictions to assess progress toward achieving goals and outcomes.

Principles and Beliefs: Principles and beliefs guide decision-making and provide a foundation for developing mission, vision and goals.

Profile: A profile is a brief description of the school jurisdiction or school that gives context for the plan. Profiles include such information as characteristics of communities, students, programs, size and location.

Strategies: Strategies are actions that school jurisdictions and schools take to achieve goals and desired outcomes that meet the needs of all their students. They address local circumstances, issues, trends and opportunities.

Targets: Targets show desired levels of performance to be attained by a certain time. Targets are expressed quantitatively.

Trend: A trend shows a direction of data over time, e.g., enrolment growth.

Vision: A vision describes a possible and desired future state for the organization, grounded in reality, which inspires and guides decisions and actions.

Terms Related to the Accountability Pillar Evaluation

(in logical, rather than alphabetical order)

Accountability Pillar: The Accountability Pillar is one of the three pillars of the Renewed Funding Framework and enhances school authority accountability for results in return for greater flexibility in the allocation of resources. The Accountability Pillar places increased emphasis on the achievement of specific outcomes by evaluating and reporting results on a common set of measures, and where results are low or declining, taking action to improve student programs and results in subsequent years. The focus of the Accountability Pillar is on improving school authority results and attaining high levels of achievement.

Accountability Pillar Performance Measures: The Accountability Pillar performance measures are a required, consistent set of measures, each of which is calculated on a comparable basis for all school authorities. School authorities are required to include this common set of performance measures and evaluations in their plans and report the results and updated evaluations for these measures in their Annual Education Results Reports. The measures draw from various kinds of data, including:

- Results of provincial testing programs
- Student outcomes, such as dropout and high school completion rates
- Student, parent and teacher perceptions.

Category: Accountability Pillar measures are grouped into seven categories that represent key aspects of education that are important to parents and the public:

- Safe and caring schools
- Student learning opportunities
- Student learning achievement (Grades K to 9)
- Student learning achievement (Grades 10 to 12)
- Preparation for lifelong learning, employment and citizenship
- Parental involvement
- Continuous improvement.

Evaluation Methodology: The evaluation methodology assesses each measure in the Accountability Pillar in terms of achievement and improvement, then combines the achievement and improvement evaluations to calculate overall evaluations for measures and categories.

Achievement Evaluation: The Achievement evaluation is based on comparing the current charter school result against a set of provincial standards that are expected to be fixed for 7 – 10 years. The achievement evaluation results in one of the following five achievement levels: Very High, High, Intermediate, Low, Very Low.

Standard: A standard is an established, quantifiable level of performance that is commonly understood and agreed upon, and is the basis for judging actual performance. The standards for each Accountability Pillar measure are calculated from baseline data (based on the distribution of results for all school boards at a fixed point in time). The 5^{th}, 25^{th}, 75^{th} and 95^{th} percentiles of the distribution of the baseline results

are used to establish the five achievement evaluation levels (listed above under "Achievement Evaluation").

Baseline: Baseline data constitute a starting point for comparisons of results against standards. Baseline data for each Accountability Pillar measure are established by averaging each school board's results across the three years to create a school board three-year average. The three years that form the baseline for calculating standards differ among measure types, depending on data availability:

- For student achievement measures (i.e., Provincial Achievement tests and Diploma Exams), the baseline three-year average uses data from school years 2001/02, 2002/03, and 2003/04.
- For the student outcome measures (dropout, diploma exam participation, high school completion and post-secondary transition rates), the baseline three-year average uses data from the 2000/01, 2001/02 and 2002/03 school years, except for the Rutherford Scholarship eligibility rates, which, starting with the 2007/2008 results, uses data from 2004/2005, 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 for the baseline three-year average.
- For survey measures, the baseline three-year average uses results from 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06.

Improvement Evaluation: The improvement evaluation focuses on improvement over time. Improvement is evaluated by comparing the charter school's current result against its own previous three-year average using chi-square. (Chi square is a statistical test to determine the probability that there is no significant difference between an observed outcome and the expected outcome. In the case of the Accountability Pillar improvement evaluation, the chi square test is used to determine the probability that there is no significant difference between a school authority's current result on a measure and its prior three-year average for that measure.) The improvement evaluation results in one of the following five improvement levels: Improved Significantly, Improved, Maintained, Declined, Declined Significantly.

Overall Measure Evaluation: Once the improvement and achievement levels have been calculated for a measure, an overall measure evaluation is calculated, which reflects both the achievement evaluation and the improvement evaluation. The overall measure evaluation is reported on a five point scale: Excellent, Good, Acceptable, Issue, Concern.

Category Evaluation: For each category of Accountability Pillar measures, the overall evaluations for each measure within that group are averaged to provide an evaluation for that category. The averaging is done by assigning the following numbers to the overall evaluation for each measure: Excellent: 2; Good: 1; Acceptable: 0; Issue: -1, and Concern: -2. These values are averaged and rounded to the nearest whole number. This result is then compared with the above list of assigned numerical values for each of the five evaluation ratings to determine the evaluation for the category.

Improvement/Decline: Improvement or decline for an Accountability Pillar measure is determined by comparing the current result against the previous three-year average using the chi-square test of statistical significance. Using the chi-square test:

- an **improvement or decline** occurs when the current result is at least one standard deviation above or below the previous three-year average, but less than two standard deviations.
- a **significant improvement or decline** (at the 5% level of confidence, or nineteen times out of twenty) occurs when the current result is approximately two or more standard deviations above or below the previous three-year average.

Target: Targets related to achievement standards are set for each year of the plan when the evaluation of results for a measure is "Issue" or "Concern". These targets for Accountability Pillar measures:

- have a higher numerical value each year than the current result (except for dropout rates, where a lower result shows improvement)
- show reasonable progress toward or move into the next higher achievement standard over the three years.

Making gains over time toward the next achievement level or attaining it will be reflected in the improvement evaluation as well. At minimum the improvement evaluation would be "Maintained," and could be "Improved" or "Improved Significantly."

Appendix

Development of the Accountability Pillar

Drawing on the work of the Funding Framework Review Committee and the Review Committee on Outcomes, the Accountability Pillar Design and Implementation Advisory Sub-Committee (the sub-committee) worked with Alberta Education to develop the Accountability Pillar, including identifying the common set of performance measures. The following organizations were represented on the sub-committee: Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA), College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS), Association of School Business Officials of Alberta (ASBOA), The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA), Fédération des conseils scolaires francophones de l'Alberta (FCSFA).

The sub-committee's guiding principles for the Accountability Pillar:

- transparent process
- emphasis on achievement
- holistic approach to evaluation
- on-going collaborative processes
- all jurisdictions can succeed.

The Accountability Pillar is aligned with Alberta Education's goals and outcomes for the K – 12 system and is integrated with the Accountability Framework in place since 1995. The Accountability Pillar focuses on:

- supporting continuous improvement
- improving student outcomes
- providing a clear understanding of jurisdiction performance and successes.

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